



Republic of Georgia soldiers participate in a ceremony marking the deployment of the 31st Light Infantry Battalion in support of I MEF (Fwd) in Afghanistan. Read [the MCCLL topical paper on the Georgia Deployment Program](#).

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# Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL)

MAY 2010 NEWSLETTER

## Inside this issue:

### Featured Articles

**Regimental Combat Team (RCT) Operations in Afghanistan:** The third in a series of topical papers, based on a MCCLL collection visit with Marine Expeditionary Brigade - Afghanistan (MEB-A), addresses the operations of the RCT.

**Lessons from the First Shipboard Deployment of the MV-22B:** The deployment of Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 263 with the 22d Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) represented the first shipboard deployment of the MV-22B Osprey.

**2d Battalion, 3d Marines (2/3) Afghanistan After Action Report (AAR):** The deployment of 2/3 in northern Helmand Province resulted in major improvements in the security posture throughout the battalion's area of operations.

**Revised OEF Escalation of Force (EOF) Standard Operating Procedure (SOP):** The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Afghanistan has published a revision to the ISAF EOF SOP.

**Lessons from the Georgia Deployment Program:** The 31st Light Infantry Battalion will be the first Georgian battalion deployed in the Marine Corps area of operations in Afghanistan as part of the Georgia Deployment Program.

**Humanitarian Assistance/Relief (HA/DR) Missions:** The Marine Corps, along with the other military services, has performed extremely important HA/DR missions following natural disasters in Southeast Asia, the Indian Ocean, Haiti, and other far-flung locales.

**Afghanistan - The Way Ahead: An Emerald Express Symposium:** Audio files and transcripts are available from the most recent Emerald Express symposium that addressed the future in Afghanistan.

**Observations on Marjeh from the Afghanistan National Army (ANA):** The ANA Lessons Learned Center has published an initial report on the Operation Moshtarak mission in the city of Marjeh.

**What MCCLL Topical Papers Are Users Reading?** Statistics are provided on some of the most popular recent MCCLL products.

**How Afghanistan and Al Anbar Province, Iraq, Are Different:** A short video from the Marine Corps Intelligence Activity (MCIA) highlights key differences in Marine Corps operations in these two theaters.

### News

Three items are highlighted this month: (1) a **"smartbook" on the various MRAP variants**, (2) **the latest newsletter from the Naval Operational Medical Lessons Learned Center (NOMLLC)**, and (3) a news article on how a **combat simulator can help address the issue of combat stress**.

**Reading Lists and Book Review:** This month, two books are featured: (1) **Once a Marine** by Nick Popaditch (with Mike Steare) from the Commandant's List (along with the Marine Corps University study guide) and (2) a very recent book, **Talking to Terrorists** by Mark Perry.

**Roster of MCCLL Liaison Officers:** This roster provides points of contact information for MCCLL representatives assigned at major Marine Corps and Joint commands and organizations.

The Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) newsletter provides "initial impressions" summaries that identify key observations and potential lessons from collection efforts. These observations highlight potential shortfalls, risks or issues experienced by units that may suggest a need for change. **The observations are not service level decisions.** In addition, some information in this newsletter has been compiled from publicly available sources and is not official USMC policy. Although the information has been gathered from reliable sources, the currency and completeness of the information is subject to change and cannot be guaranteed. Your comments on any topics addressed in this newsletter are welcome. Questions can be directed to: **Mr. Harry T. Johnson, Editor** Telephone: (703) 432-1279 DSN: 312-378-1279

# Regimental Combat Team Operations in Afghanistan

Last month's newsletter highlighted the first two volumes in a series of three reports based on a visit by a Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) collection team in November/December 2009 with the staff of Marine Expeditionary Brigade - Afghanistan (MEB-A), as well as the staffs of its major subordinate commands (Regimental Combat Team (RCT) 7, Marine Aircraft Group (MAG) 40, and Combat Logistics Regiment (CLR) 2). The purpose of the collection was to address the mission, scope, successes, shortfalls, equipment, manning and emerging issues associated with MEB-A operations. The first two reports in the series addressed [command element operations](#) and the [medical evacuation \(MEDEVAC\) mission](#). (In addition to these unclassified/For Official Use Only (FOUO) reports, classified versions of the documents are available on the MCCLL SIPR website at: <http://www.mccll.usmc.smil.mil>.)

The third report is also now available, entitled [Regimental Combat Team - Afghanistan Operations: Summary of Observations from RCT-7, February through December 2009](#). (A classified version of this paper is also available on the MCCLL SIPR website.) During the interviews, the RCT staff emphasized that a successful counterinsurgency (COIN) strategy in Afghanistan requires distributing small units among the local populace. Commanders must balance this requirement (which entails a higher degree of risk)



*The Governor of Helmand Province, Gulab Mangal, tours the newly constructed District Government Center in Nawa, which was completed during the RCT-7 deployment and is one example of the progress achieved in the regiment's area of operations.*

## Major Bob Piddock, Operations Officer, RCT-7:

*"We will be winning when commanders can wield a non-kinetic round as quickly as a 155mm kinetic round."*

with basing forces on large camps in order to provide greater risk protection. In particular, when small unit leaders, located among the local citizenry, request support and resources, these must be readily available in a timely manner. Since each locality within the RCT area of operations was unique, the RCT-7 staff, as well as Marines at subordinate levels, had to acquire an in-depth understanding of the complex relationships among the populace, the enemy, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA), the Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF), and outside influences. This knowledge helped to inform the "shape, clear, hold, build, and transition" strategy and processes throughout the RCT deployment.

## Among the numerous insightful comments of the RCT-7 staff were:

- **Command Relationships:** In delineating responsibilities between the MEB and RCT, the MEB tended to focus on coordination with higher headquarters, the allocation of resources, and the synchronization of tactical actions, while the RCT concentrated on planning and coordinating these tactical actions.
  - ⇒ The inclusion of other units and agencies in weekly targeting meetings was instrumental in building solid working relationships.
- **Operations:** Civil affairs, human terrain teams, and other attached and supporting enablers should be integrated into operations. Each of these elements is of significant value in COIN operations.
  - ⇒ Planning must be synchronized across all lines of operation, with managers ensuring that these operations are not planned in isolation.



*Participants in the Marjah Accelerated Agricultural Transition Program (MAATP) register their crops and the location of their residences at the Marjah Government Center. The program is designed to facilitate the transition from illicit to licit crops.*

⇒ The logistics operations center had two functions: movement tracking of convoys within the regiment's area of operations and serving as a clearing house for all requests for support submitted to the RCT.

- **The Enemy:** Units must understand the different categories of Taliban fighters, ranging from "hard-core" members, who are motivated primarily by ideology (and are in the minority), to members of the local populace who are involved because of poverty, coercion, circumstances, needs, fear, tribal alliances, or other factors. The latter are also more conducive to reconciliation.
- **The Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF):** Particular attention should be paid to resourcing the ANSF, with resources timed to match both seasonal weather variations and the progression of ANSF capabilities
  - ⇒ The battlespace commanders should be the direct partners and mentors to their ANSF counterparts. Individuals assigned to police mentoring teams (PMTs) should be hand selected and trained to a standard and to the mission they will be assigned in theater.

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# Lessons from the First Shipboard Deployment of the MV-22B

Three land-based combat deployments of MV-22B Osprey squadrons during Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) took place from September 2007 through April 2009, with the aircraft acquitting itself well in performing a variety of operational missions. The lessons learned from two of these Iraq deployments were addressed in collection efforts by the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) that were documented in the topical papers, [MV-22 Operations in Iraq with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron \(VMM\) 263](#), dated May 2008, and [MV-22 Combat Operations in Iraq with VMM-266](#), dated March 2009. The OIF combat operations of the aircraft were followed by its first shipboard deployment, with VMM-263 (Rein) Composite Squadron deploying as an element of the 22d Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU). During VMM-263 pre-deployment training with the USS Bataan Amphibious Ready Group (ARG), MCCLL conducted another collection effort, documenting the results in [MV-22B Osprey MEU Predeployment Training](#), dated September 2009. As a follow-on to that report, MCCLL then interviewed staff from VMM-263 and the 22d MEU in December 2009 after their return from deployment to identify additional observations and recommendations concerning the ability of the aircraft to operate afloat as part of the MEU air combat element (ACE). The results have now been documented in [MV-22B Osprey Operations During Initial MEU Deployment: Lessons and Observations from VMM-263 \(Rein\) Composite Squadron](#).



*An MV-22B Osprey from VMM-263 takes off from the flight deck of the multi-purpose amphibious assault ship, USS Bataan (LHDS), in November 2009 for a flight to Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, and transfer to VMM-261 in support of the 2d Marine Expeditionary Brigade.*

## Among the comments made by the staffs of VMM-263 and the 22d MEU were:

- **Doctrine:** Due to its capabilities, the MV-22B should not be employed merely as a one-for-one replacement for the legacy CH-46E helicopter.

⇒ Integrating the MV-22B with other aircraft type/model series in the constricted environment of amphibious shipping further demonstrated its new and enhanced capabilities.



*An MV-22B Osprey and a UH-1N Huey helicopter from VMM-263 arrive at Udairi Army Airfield, Kuwait, to participate with other elements of the 22d MEU in sustainment training aboard Camp Buehring.*

- **Operations:** The Osprey self-deployed from the USS Bataan off the coast of Pakistan into Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, demonstrating its ability to launch from over the horizon and take advantage of its speed and range.

- As a result, the MV-22B demonstrated its ability to insert a ground force in one wave and turn a mission that was considered insurmountable with legacy airframes into a routine operation.

⇒ The MEU employed the MV-22B as a primary casualty evacuation (CASEVAC) platform, as well as the primary quick reaction force (QRF) platform, further capitalizing on its speed and endurance. The CASEVAC capabilities of the MV-22B should be further developed to include ensuring communications and medical equipment are available for the transportation and in-flight treatment of patients.

⇒ The key to integrating the MV-22B with ACE rotary-wing aircraft was coordinating timing, altitude, and airspace de-confliction among the aircraft involved.

- **Training:** In the future, pre-deployment training should include more fully developed split-ARG operations.

⇒ It was recommended that training scenario threat levels be increased during the pre-deployment training program cycle.

- **Organization and Personnel:** The Marine Corps should continue to evaluate the MEU ACE aircraft composition relative to expected mission sets. In particular, a baseline footprint should be established for a typical MEU ACE taking into consideration the ongoing integration of the MV-22B and UH-1Y.

- **Equipment:** The Marine Corps should continued to expand the MV-22B command and control capability.

⇒ The deployed Aviation Consolidated Allowance List (AVCAL), plus the worldwide supply chain distribution system, was able to sustain the 22d MEU ACE afloat without significant impacts to operations. All of the type/model series aircraft with the MEU required approximately the same level of attention for reliability, maintainability, and availability.

## Col Gareth Brandl, Commanding Officer, 22d MEU:

*"We go fast and we go far, and we can do that with the MV-22."*

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## 2d Battalion, 3d Marines Afghanistan After Action Report

In May 2009, 2d Battalion, 3d Marines (2/3), based out of Marine Corps Base Hawaii, deployed to northern Helmand Province and eastern Farah Province in support of Marine Expeditionary Brigade - Afghanistan (MEB). Companies of the battalion were widely dispersed in the Now Zad, Golestan, Bakwa and Delaram districts of these two provinces, with the mission to conduct counterinsurgency operations, help train and mentor the Afghanistan National Security Forces (ANSF), and support other lines of operation, including governance, reconstruction and development.

Based on this deployment, the battalion has completed its [Operation Enduring Freedom \(OEF\) After Action Report \(AAR\)](#), which includes individual sections prepared by the companies on their pre-deployment training program, conditions in their AOs upon arrival, major operations during the deployment, condition upon their departure, and other key observations. Many of the comments from the companies address the need to focus on the local populace, respect local culture, and ensure that all Marines and Sailors understand the second and third order effects of their actions. The AAR points out that, since the insurgency does not have to win in order to succeed (only not lose), inaction on the part of coalition forces is not an option. One of the major operations conducted by 2/3 during this period was the liberation of the town of Dehanna in the Now Zad District. Following the successful effort to capture this Taliban stronghold and clear the town and surrounding mountains, the battalion's efforts focused on helping to establish a Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan (GIROA) presence in the town and provide assistance in scheduling shuras and voting. This operation resulted in a greatly demoralized enemy and significantly greater confidence shown by the local populace in the ANSF, coalition forces, and the GIROA. Civil-military operations were then able to accelerate, with plans being implemented to reopen the bazaar and re-populate the town.

The Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) remains committed to collecting and disseminating AARs from commands and units following their combat deployments, exercises and training evolutions. We encourage units to work with their local MCCLL liaison officers to ensure their AARs are prepared and entered into the MCCLL repositories. A list of these liaison officers is located [at the end of this newsletter](#).

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*The platoon commander and platoon sergeant from the sniper platoon, 2d Battalion, 3d Marines (2/3) teach Afghanistan National Army (ANA) soldiers the basics of long distance shooting at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Delaram.*

## Revised OEF Escalation of Force Standard Operating Procedures

The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Afghanistan has published a [Revision to the ISAF Escalation of Force \(EOF\) Standard Operating Procedures \(SOP\)](#) that is designed to help achieve a balance between protecting coalition forces and protecting the Afghanistan population. The revised SOP draws upon the [counterinsurgency \(COIN\) guidance provided by the Commander, ISAF](#), and related directives, as well as recent lessons learned by units conducting operations in Afghanistan. The SOP is not intended to limit the inherent right of coalition forces for self defense, but instead seeks to help protect the local populace by providing commanders and individuals with principles and procedures to be followed in employing force, when necessary, in a carefully controlled and disciplined manner.

The SOP emphasizes that the tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) used by ISAF units in responding to threats during COIN operations are known by the enemy, who purposely disguises hostile actions and deliberately manipulates circumstances to draw coalition forces into the trap of causing civilian casualties. The enemy will also seek to attribute all civilian casualty incidents to the coalition and use this to create successful propaganda campaigns. Note that the SOP also includes a concise pocket guide for Marines, Soldiers and Sailors that summarizes key points from the rest of the SOP.



*Marines from Echo Company, 2d Battalion, 3d Marines (2/3) patrol the streets of the city of Delaram with members of the Afghanistan National Police (ANP). A main objective during these patrols is to ensure that the local populace is protected, while, at the same time, to protect coalition forces.*

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# Lessons from the Georgia Deployment Program



*A Marine observer/controller from 1st Battalion, 8th Marines (1/8) conducts instructional pre-combat checks and inspections with Georgia soldiers from the 31st Light Infantry Battalion during a dismounted patrol training scenario. This was an element of the Georgia battalion's two-week mission rehearsal exercise in Hohenfels, Germany.*

In 2009, the Republic of Georgia agreed to deploy four light infantry battalions to Afghanistan in support of the Marine Expeditionary Brigade - Afghanistan (MEB-A) (which has now been replaced by I Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) (Forward)). Each Georgian battalion (designated as the Georgia Deployment Program International Security Assistance Force (GDP-ISAF)) is scheduled to deploy, in turn, for a six-month period over a two-year span beginning this year. U.S. Marine Forces Europe (MARFOREUR), as the lead U.S. European Command (EUCOM) service component, was given the responsibility of conducting a program to train and equip each Georgian battalion to facilitate its successful integration with I MEF (Fwd). In preparation for this training, a team from the Marine Corps Training and Advisory Group (MCTAG), Marine Corps Forces Command (MARFORCOM), the Training and Education Command (TECOM) and I MEF conducted an assessment in June 2009 of the ability of the 31st Light Infantry Battalion (the initial Georgian battalion scheduled for deployment) to conduct operations as a subordinate element of I MEF (Fwd). Then in September, the first six-month training program began, which was completed in March 2010. The three follow-on Georgian battalions will then be trained in turn.

Early in 2010, the Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) began a three-phase collection on the GDP-ISAF to document the requirements, challenges, and best practices for establishing "train and equip" programs in support of coalition deployments. Phase 1 was a collection in Germany in January during the training of the 31st Light Infantry Battalion that included interviews with MARFOREUR and EUCOM staff members. Phase 2 was a CONUS collection in February and March with members of the MCTAG, TECOM, and the Joint Staff J5. Phase 3 is scheduled to be conducted in theater at the mid-point of the 31st Light Infantry Battalion deployment and will include interviews with the staffs of I MEF (Fwd) and the regimental combat team. The results of the first two phases of the collection have now been documented in the topical paper, [Security Force Assistance: Georgia Deployment Program - International Security Assistance Force](#).

## Major Frank Simmons, USMC, S-3, Marine Corps Training and Advisory Group (MCTAG):

*"Having that [full curriculum] for Georgia [including a program of instruction (POI), lessons plans, instructor notes, etc.] will certainly put us ahead of the curve when working with other countries as well."*

## Among the comments made by the staffs of MARFOREUR, EUCOM, MCTAG, TECOM, and the Joint Staff J5 were:

- **Training:** The compressed timeline between assessment of the Georgian battalion, development of training plans and a program of instruction, sourcing and deploying Marine instructors, and the conduct of training and a mission rehearsal exercise required the commitment of the Marine Corps senior leadership and a priority of effort among multiple staffs.

⇒ The process used to develop the training program offers

much that can be applied to future efforts, including ■ identify the end state with the partner nation and the U.S.

Embassy country team, ■ have outside agencies conduct an assessment against the backdrop of the end state, ■ plan the development and approval by all parties, ■ conduct the training/engagement, and ■ reassess/revalidate and implement changes as required.

⇒ In particular, these efforts provided OSD and the Joint staff with an opportunity to develop and standardize a planning process for future partner nation "train and equip" missions.

⇒ Upon completion of the GDP-ISAF training, MCTAG and MARFOREUR assessed the Georgian battalion as having a basic ability to conduct distributed operations in a counterinsurgency (COIN) environment, including responsibilities associated with holding battlespace. The interviewees recommended that augments be provided to the battalion in certain areas.

- **Equipment Sourcing:** Identifying specific requirements for the Georgian battalion and validating and sourcing the equipment was difficult because the mission had not yet been fully defined. Early planning had to be based on assumptions regarding equipment requirements.

⇒ For future training evolutions, training should be conducted on the same types of equipment that the battalions will employ in Afghanistan.



*Republic of Georgia soldiers participate in a ceremony in Tbilisi, Georgia, marking the deployment of the 31st Light Infantry Battalion in support of I Marine Expeditionary Force (Forward) in Afghanistan. This is the first foreign military force to deploy as part of a Marine regimental combat team.*

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## Humanitarian Assistance/Disaster Relief (HA/DR) Missions

### HA/DR Missions of 3d Marine Expeditionary Brigade



*This tent provided living space for three families in Burma (Myanmar) in the aftermath of Cyclone Nargis in 2008.*

The role of the military in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) efforts has been widely publicized in recent years as the Marine Corps, along with the other military services, has performed extremely important missions to save lives and property both within the U.S. and in far flung locales. Examples of missions performed by the 3d Marine Expeditionary Brigade are provided in a recent briefing by Brigadier General Ronald L. Bailey, which was developed as a HA/DR professional military education (PME) resource. The briefing, entitled [Operations Sea Angel II, Caring Response and Sri Lanka](#), summarizes many of the lessons learned during Marine Corps HA/DR missions in southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean. These missions included Marine Corps HA/DR operations in the aftermaths of Cyclone Marian in Bangladesh in 1991 (Operation Sea Angel I), the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004 (Operation Unified Assistance), Cyclone Sidr in Bangladesh in 2007 (Operation Sea Angel II), and Cyclone Nargis in Burma (Myanmar) in 2008 (Operation Caring Response).

BGen Bailey's briefing emphasizes that the success of an HA/DR mission is closely tied to the ability of military units to develop close working relationships with embassy staffs, country teams, the host nation government, and the host nation military. All support required during the operation should be coordinated through the U.S. embassies, including coordination for access to the Department of State (DoS) network. Obtaining current maps is also a critical requirement for the humanitarian assistance survey team (HAST), as is having the capability to conduct airfield surveys. Strategic communications is a critical line of operation in all HA/DR missions. Among the lessons learned from these deployments was the desirability of deploying the HAST via commercial lift (with the team members having both official and tourist passports) in order to mitigate the requirement to obtain diplomatic clearances when U.S. military lift are used.

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### Operation Unified Response in Haiti

Closer to home and much more recently, Operation Unified Response (OUR) was initiated very quickly after the devastating earthquake in Haiti on 12 January 2010 and will be the subject of many after action reports (AARs) and other assessments that seek to determine how the military could improve upon its successes in Haiti. The Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) established a [Haiti HA/DR Community of Practice](#) in January to begin immediately capturing available documentation and lessons learned from this operation. In addition, MCCLL is now in the midst of a major collection effort that specifically focuses on the Marine Corps response to this disaster. The results of this collection will be available shortly and will be featured in an upcoming newsletter.



*Marines from Battalion Landing Team 3d Battalion, 2d Marines (BLT 2/3), 22d Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), hand out supplies to residents of Cotes De Fer, Haiti, at a temporary supply distribution point.*

Among the first documents to be published with lessons learned based on the OUR military response is from the Army Materiel Command (AMC), entitled [Operation Unified Response Strategic Perspective, AMC Lessons Learned](#). Although the document focuses only on U.S. Army lessons from the operation, many of the HA/DR principles outlined in the report have general relevancy for all of the military services.

Readers who have a special interest in HA/DR topics may also wish to review the MCCLL [Joint Task Force Katrina Community of Practice](#) that was set up six years ago to capture after action reports and individual lessons based on the military response to the widespread devastation caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita along the Gulf coast in 2005.

#### From the Army Materiel Command's Operation Unified Response Strategic Lessons Learned:

*"The purpose of this presentation is to provide an organized collection of observations, insights, lessons learned and best practices taken from a strategic perspective of planning and execution in support of Operation Unified Response (OUR). The intent of this project is not to merely record what happened, but to also give future sustainment commanders and planners a realistic understanding of what they might experience along with an organizational blueprint of the types of personnel and skill-sets needed to perform well during humanitarian missions in austere environments."*

[Operation Unified Response Strategic Perspective, AMC Lessons Learned](#). Although the document focuses only on U.S. Army lessons from the operation, many of the HA/DR principles outlined in the report have general relevancy for all of the military services.

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## Afghanistan - The Way Ahead: An Emerald Express Symposium

### Opening Remarks by MGen Robert B. Neller, USMC, President, Marine Corps University:

"... Now, I would submit that whatever success Marines or other coalition forces have achieved in Iraq and so far in Afghanistan have been due to effective advising and partnering with host nation security forces, both army and police; working effectively with the interagency in Afghanistan, with provincial reconstruction teams who they themselves are working with local and national Afghan government officials in understanding that the people of Afghanistan, their security and economic well-being, respect for their culture and way of life are of paramount importance; and that understanding of these matters and having an appreciation of the impact on the success of the mission at all levels, from private to general, is critical. . ."

The Emerald Express Program is a core component of the Small Wars Center of Excellence (SWCOE) within the Wargaming Division of the Marine Corps Warfighting Laboratory (MCWL). It is a long-standing program designed to garner critical insights and observations from real-world military operations, distribute them to as wide an audience as possible for use in future similar employments, advance the mission of the SWCOE, and inform and shape larger wargaming programs, as appropriate. The program regularly schedules symposiums on topics of particular interest within the Marine Corps. The most recent symposium was hosted last month by Marine Corps University (MCU) on the topic of [Afghanistan: The Way Ahead](#). The purpose of this particular symposium was to improve understanding of the Marine Corps area of operations (AO) in southern Afghanistan and to focus on the multidimensional and multinational approaches for enabling the Marine Corps and its partners to succeed in the historical and ideological birthplace of the Taliban movement. This region continues to be the major stronghold of the insurgency in Afghanistan, as well as being the epicenter of opium cultivation in the world.



*Marines from 2d Battalion, 3d Marines (2/3), in partnership with soldiers from the Afghanistan National Army (ANA), raid a known opium storage compound south of Delaram in southern Afghanistan. About 1,300 pounds of opium were found behind furniture, under bedding, and inside walls and floors of the building.*

The audio files and transcripts of the symposium proceedings are available on the [MCU Website](#) for each of the four discussion panels: ■ Geographical, Cultural and Historical Overview of Southern Afghanistan, ■ Transition of Military Authority to the Afghanistan Security Forces (ANSF), ■ Governing Afghanistan: District Councils, Development, and Judicial Reform, and ■ Defining, Dealing With, and Defeating the Neo-Taliban and Their Message. [Return to the Table of Contents!](#)

## Observations on Marjeh from the Afghanistan National Army

[Last month's newsletter](#) highlighted a report published by the Afghanistan National Army (ANA) Lessons Learned Center in August 2009 (with support from the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL)), which provided an assessment of the current counter-insurgency capabilities of the ANA. The report was based on visits by a Collections and Analysis Team to the ANA Training Centers and the ANA Corps to interview key leaders and staff members.

The ANA Lessons Learned Center has now published a very timely report, entitled [Observations from Marjeh](#), that provides preliminary observations on the Operation Moshtarak mission in the Nad-e Ali District of central Helmand Province. Operation Moshtarak was conducted from February through April 2010 to reestablish Afghanistan government authority in the district, while ensuring the safety of the local populace, separating the populace from the insurgents, and paving the way for reconstruction and economic activities. Prior to the operation, Marjeh had effectively been under Taliban control for two years, with social and cultural services on the verge of collapse. Poppy fields were common throughout the region, with corruption and narcotics trafficking undermining governance and economic progress in the region. During Operation Moshtarak, Marine Corps, U.S. Army and ANA units were partnered to conduct the clearing operations. The ANA Lessons Learned Center report is based on interviews with all three groups, including ANA soldiers who were partnered, as well as those who were not. The report highlights the fact that ANA units experienced varying degrees of success in partnering, with many recommendations for improving partnered operations in the future. Of particular interest to many Marines will likely be the five vignettes that are included in the report. These vignettes address such topics as ensuring the safety of civilian hostages, dealing with specific improvised explosive device (IEDs) emplacements, and targeting enemy snipers.



*An Afghanistan National Army (ANA) soldier fires a grenade from a launcher on his AK-47 at Taliban insurgents in Marjeh. The ANA soldiers joined Marines from 1st Battalion, 3d Marines (1/3) for a heliborne assault earlier in the day to seize a key road intersection.*

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## What MCCLL Topical Papers Are Users Reading?

Recent changes to the MCCLL database software are facilitating the collection of more accurate statistics on the usage of our NIPR and SIPR websites. As a result, we now have much better data concerning the number of users accessing specific documents in our repositories, as well as better statistics on the number and demographics of registered users. The collection of these web statistics is designed to be one element in a concerted effort to make our website, products, and services more useful for Marines, government civilians, and contractors, as well as individuals throughout the lessons learned community who read MCCLL topical papers, unit after actions reports, individual lessons, weekly rollups of tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) (SIPR), and other documents in our repositories. In future newsletters, we intend to publish selected data on website usage, as well as keep you informed of enhancements to our system as they are implemented. One example of the available data is the ranking of MCCLL topical papers according to the total number of downloads during specific time frames. These are the MCCLL reports that were accessed most often during April 2010:

1. [Marine Expeditionary Brigade - Afghanistan \(MEB-A\) Operations](#)
2. [Medical Evacuation Support of MEB-A Operations](#)
3. [High Mobility Artillery Rocket System \(HIMARS\)](#)
4. [Regimental Combat Team Afghanistan Operations](#)
5. [Drawdown, Retrograde and Redeployment of OIF Forces: Logistics Throughput & Capacity Drawdown](#)
6. [Drawdown, Retrograde and Redeployment of OIF Forces: Command Element Synchronization](#)
7. [Operations in Afghanistan, Volume II: An Anthology of Reports and Lessons, 2007 - 2009](#)
8. [Shadow Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron Operations in Iraq](#)
9. [Unmanned Aircraft System: RQ-11b Raven Group 1 Employment in OIF](#)
10. [Distribution Operations: Lessons and Observations from 1st MLG \(Forward\) in OIF 08](#)

These topical papers were read by Marine Corps officers and enlisted personnel of all grades from General Officer down to E-3. They were accessed most often by DoD civilians and contractors and by officers in the grades of O-3 through O-5 and NCOs in the grades of E-5 through E-8.

Also during the month of April, **756 new users** registered on our NIPR website. As we begin to implement improvements to our websites, we hope that all of these statistics will begin to show an upward trend as more Marines and other individuals decide that the MCCLL repositories can provide useful information to help them perform more productively in their current assignments, as well as help prepare them for future assignments and deployments. As always, we encourage your [feedback](#) on how we can improve our website, products or other services. [Return to the Table of Contents!](#)

## How Afghanistan and Al Anbar Province, Iraq, Are Different

The Marine Corps Intelligence Activity (MCIA) has produced a short video that highlights many of the key differences between Marine Corps counterinsurgency operations in Afghanistan and those in Iraq. The video, entitled [How Afghanistan is Different from Al Anbar, Iraq](#), is less than seven minutes long and can be readily viewed in a very short session. Many Marines will already be familiar with most of the topics addressed, but it should serve as a quick refresher for newly deploying units. Among the topics addressed are: ■ the diverse nature of insurgent groups faced in Afghanistan, ■ the history of warlord control in the country, the abuses of the local populace by these warlords after the end of Soviet Union domination, and the rise of the Taliban in response to these abuses, ■ the skills of the Taliban and other groups in small unit tactics, ■ the safe haven provided to insurgent groups in Pakistan, ■ insurgency funding that is based in large part on poppy cultivation, ■ the rural nature of the insurgency (as opposed to the Iraq insurgency, which focused on urban areas), ■ the distrust of the local populace in the central Afghanistan government, and ■ the Pahstunwali code, which emphasizes hospitality to strangers and revenge against enemies.



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## News

### Mine-Resistant, Ambush-Protected (MRAP) Vehicle Smartbook

The Joint Program Office (JPO) for the Mine-Resistant, Ambush-Protected (MRAP) Vehicle Program has prepared an [MRAP Vehicles' Smartbook](#) that provides a concise overview of all of the MRAP variants being produced by different manufacturers. The smart-book documents the systems characteristics of these variants, including such important parameters as the minimum ground clearance, maximum side

slope, fording depth, minimum turning diameter, maximum speed, etc. Variants produced by BAE - Ground System Division, BAE - TVS, Force Protection Industries, GDLS-Canada, Navistar Defense, and Oshkosh are addressed. These include the CAT I (4x4), CAT II (6x6 and 4x4), and CAT III (6x6) variants, as well as the MRAP All-Terrain Vehicle (MRAP-ATV) (produced by Oshkosh).

Oshkosh M-ATV



### Lessons Learned from the Naval Operational Medicine

The Naval Operational Medical Lessons Learned Center (NOMLLC) in Pensacola, FL, a component of the Naval Operational Medicine Institute (NOMI), is responsible for the collection and dissemination of lessons learned on all aspects of patient care delivery within the fleet and the operating forces. The Center also publishes a quarterly newsletter with many well-researched articles on patient care and related issues, many of which are highly relevant for ongoing Marine Corps operations. The NOMLLC newsletters have been featured many times in MCCLL newsletters. The most [recent edition of the NOMLLC newsletter](#) is an excellent example of the

relevancy of its topics to the Marine Corps, with articles on such topics as: ■ a second report by NOMLLC on health service support in Afghanistan, summarizing the key findings of Bravo Medical Company, Combat Logistics Regiment - 2, ■ the mid-term report of Alpha Surgical Company which followed Bravo Company in theater, ■ the role of the USNS Comfort in providing patient care during Operation Unified Response in Haiti, ■ the latest DoD policy concerning minimum medical standards for contingency deployments, ■ policy updates by U.S. Central Command on individual protection and unit deployment, ■ the establishment of a Navy Preventive Medicine Detachment to provide Level 3

preventive medicine services and support to U.S. forces in southern Afghanistan, ■ up-to-date information on the Combat Application Tourniquet (C-A-T) and on burn management, ■ comments from the field on casualty care in Afghanistan, ■ combat surgery through the eyes of a surgeon, ■ public health emergency management within DoD, and ■ policy on the use of non-U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) compliant blood products.

(Note that all of the NOMLLC newsletters from December 2006 to the present are available on the [NOMLLC website](#).)

### A Combat Simulator Helps Combat Stress

[Simulator Helps Combat Stress](#), by Gretel C. Kovach, Staff Writer, San Diego Union-Tribune

*"Their mission is to meet the village leader and assess his needs, but this being Afghanistan and war, Sgt Anthony Garbo hands out the ammunition. Then his Marines disperse, past a plot of red poppies and slabs of meat hanging in the bazaar, the Muslim call to prayer keening in the distance.*

*The last troops who pushed through this area were eviscerated by a rocket-propelled grenade. Undaunted, the squad from the 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment aims to win hearts*

*and minds. The maze of narrow, sand-strewn alleys and dun-colored adobe homes quickly fills with villagers who pelt the Marines with rocks. When Garbo finally meets the village elder, he places his hand over his heart and says, "We are trying to help you guys as best we can."*

*There is no time for tea, though.*

*Shots ricochet through the village. A woman shrieks and a man bellows "Allahu akbar", "God is great." Garbo and his squad pile into the alley to hunt for the gunmen. Dozens of hidden cameras record the action.*

*Inside the Marine Corps' Infantry Immersion Trainer, the bullets are tipped with*

*chalk, the explosions are Hollywood-style pyrotechnics and some insurgents and civilians are computerized holograms. But the weapons are real, and so is the combat stress, the military has found.*

*Two years after opening the prototype 'mixed-reality' simulator, the first Defense Department facility of its kind, in a former tomato-packing warehouse at Camp Pendleton, the Marine Corps is expanding its use of infantry immersion training to help small units make better decisions under stress. . . "*

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## Reading Lists and Book Reviews

### **Talking to Terrorists: Why America Must Engage with its Enemies** by Mark Perry (Basic Books, 2010)

**Review by Allen Quicke, Asia Times Online:**

" . . . The beginning of wisdom is to call things by their right names, says a Chinese proverb that doubtless derives from Confucius: "If names be not correct, language is not in accordance with the truth of things. If language be not in accordance with the truth of things, affairs cannot be carried on to success."

This book is in large part the stories of a handful of people who managed to break the shackles of official terminology and learn the right names of things. Some of them were able to use the knowledge to carry their affairs "on to success"; some, like Mark Perry, the author of this book, are trying to pass on to others the right names. In the case of Perry, this is clearly no dry academic exercise but an urgent mission, for the cost of calling things by the wrong names has been measured in flesh and blood since September 11, 2001, and the body count is rising. Perry performs his task with understated, but obvious, passion.

The second half of this book charts Perry's own voyage of discovery as he investigates "political Islam", as he calls it, and talks with the "terrorists", as Washington calls them. Much of this material was originally published by Asia Times Online in a 2006 series, How to Lose the 'War on Terror.' There is much to be learnt from Perry's discussions with leaders of groups like Hezbollah and Hamas - much that one can only hope Western leaders learn very soon, because if they don't, they will continue to play directly into the hands of Osama bin Laden and the "war on terror" is lost.

The first half of the book demonstrates how such wisdom, put to practical use in Iraq, turned the tide of war. It is a brutal yet wonderful irony that it was the [Marines] in the field, boots on the ground, who cottoned on first while the "grunts" in Washington - their political masters, so-called statesmen and women, policymakers and strategists - were sending them to die while they chanted their meaningless mantra, "We don't talk to terrorists," and drooled over their dreams of remaking the Middle East.

Early in his quest, in 2005, Perry meets someone he has been told has "close ties to the Sunni-led Iraqi insurgency". Perry asks his interlocutor about rumors that senior US military officers had quietly met with Iraqi insurgents, led by "a sheikh", in Jordan the previous year. The question is avoided and the discussion moves on to other topics, until it finally dawns on Perry that he is talking to a "terrorist."

"You're the sheikh," I said. "That's right." "You're with the Iraqi insurgency," I said. "You're the political wing of the Iraqi insurgency." "Yes, that's so." I hesitated for only a moment. "I don't think I can be in this room," I said. . . This was followed by silence, as a smile spread across his face. "Why not?" he asked. . . Read [more of Allen Quicke's Review](#).

The [Commandant's Professional Reading List](#) was updated in September 2009 by a review board to ensure that it remains relevant and provides all Marines with opportunities for professional and career development. The revised list includes a number of new titles, as well as changes to the previous list. The CMC list, as well as other reading lists (such as those developed by I Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) and II MEF), provide Marines with a wealth of resources for their own development programs, featuring many books and articles that are as entertaining as they are instructive. These reading lists are highlighted on the [Marine Corps University \(MCU\) web-site](#), along with discussion guides and other resources.

This month, we feature a book on the Iraq war, [Once a Marine](#) by Nick Popaditch with Mike Steere, which is on the Commandant's required reading list for all ranks, along with a recent book which offers a controversial proposal for the U.S. to engage with its enemies, [Talking to Terrorists](#) by Mark Perry.

### **Once a Marine: An Iraq War Tank Commander's Inspirational Memoir of Combat, Courage, and Recovery** by Nick Popaditch with Mike Steere (Savas Beattle LLC, 2008)

**Review by Laura Axelrod, The Birmingham News**

"On April 7, 2004, U.S. Marine Gunnery Sgt. Nick Popaditch sat in an M1A1 Main Battle Tank deep inside Fallujah's Sunni triangle. After clearing a street of insurgents, Popaditch spotted a sniper on a roof, took aim and fired. It was the last scene he saw. The next thing he heard was the sound of a rocket-propelled grenade lobbed at him by another attacker.

"After the ssst, the whole world goes blinding white like I'm inside a camera flash," Popaditch writes. "Then comes total darkness and a horrible electric-sounding hum in my ears. ... The RPG -- a four-pound missile going 300 miles an hour, more or less -- hit and blew up on my helmet."

Popaditch details his harrowing experiences in [Once a Marine](#).

The explosion took out his right eye and blew out the hearing in his right ear. A piece of shrapnel the size of a dime went through his skull and landed behind his left eye.

Popaditch used the Marine Corps values of honor, courage and commitment during his recovery. He concentrated on helping young recruits. He discovered how technology can assist people with low vision, and how best to deal with government agencies.

This exceptional book provides a clear window into the heart of a Marine and his family. It is required reading for anyone who wants to understand the meaning of gratitude, selflessness and service."

Read the [MCU Study Guide for this book on the next page](#).

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## Reading Lists and Book Review (continued)

**Review of *Talking to Terrorists* (continued)** "... Because you're killing Americans," I said. "Yes, that's right," he said, "but don't worry. I've been meeting with American military officers in this room for the last eighteen months ..."

Sheikh al-Gaood is a central figure in this part of the book, which is a blow-by-blow account of how Iraq's el-Anbar province, in 2005 a vast killing field for American soldiers and Iraqis alike, was redeemed. The unlikely heroes of the story are the "terrorists" - or Nazis, as Wolfowitz would have it - and the US Marine officers who were pitted against them until they learned to call things by their right names.

In al-Anbar, these Marine officers began to understand that the people they were fighting - the Sunni resistance - were neither terrorists, Nazis nor even Saddamists. They were simply people who had been thrown out of their jobs, civilian and military, as the US imposed its policy - a tragic blunder - of "de-Ba'athification", and installed Shi'ite lackeys in Baghdad to rule them. ..." Read the remainder of [this review in Asia Times Online](#).

### Once a Marine: Discussion Guide

#### Overview:

This memoir recounts Gunnery Sergeant Popaditch's terrifying experience of having survived an RPG shot to the head and the grueling recovery which ensued after his miraculous survival. A gung-ho Marine, Popaditch had to learn to live with his new disabilities (near blindness, deafness and lack of smell) and transform himself from a hard-charging former DI to a college student studying to become a school teacher. Popaditch's experiences also provide a damning account of the bureaucratic laziness at the Physical Evaluation Board which poorly served so many wounded Marines returning from Iraq.

#### Discussion Questions:

1. What techniques did Sergeant Major Reed use to buy time and get an estimate of the situation when Popaditch showed up in his office? In what way did the Sergeant Major handle the situation well?
2. Why does Popaditch agree to comply with Sergeant Haskamp's media request?
3. How does Popaditch make himself useful, despite his disabilities, in his new job at the S-3 shop?
4. Explain the purpose of the Physical Evaluation Board (PEB).
5. Discuss the meaning of two of Popaditch's favorite Marine sayings: "Be a zero four Marine" and "Be brilliant at the basics."
6. What lesson did Popaditch teach his boy after he learned that the boy had been lying about his homework?
7. How does Popaditch ultimately come to peace with his need to retire?
8. "If I did my job the way these Colonels did their jobs with me, I'd be in the brig." Explain the context and meaning of this quote from Popaditch.
9. Why does Popaditch admire the way Colonel McCoy and Captain Skaggs interact with the wounded Marines when they tour the ward?
10. During Popaditch's first OIF deployment, Improvised Explosive Device (IED) wasn't even a term. Later in the war, they became the primary concern of troops and leading cause of casualties. Explain the difference in psychology between Marines who fight actual insurgents and those who must "fight" IED's.
11. Discuss Popaditch's interaction with the war protestor at the garage sale. How do the two seemingly opposite people find common ground?
12. Popaditch always told his Marines: "You can do it, or you can do it pissed off." Discuss the meaning of this phrase and its applicability in the Marine Corps.
13. Chapter 54 is less than a page long and contains pre-deployment advice. The chapter ends with a quote from General Mattis: "Fight with a happy heart." What does this mean?
14. Why does Popaditch admire the Mayor of Fallujah?

#### Book Discussion Guide

Written by 2nd Lt. Abell

Read [additional Marine Corps University Discussion Guides](#)

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## Roster of MCCLL Liaison Officers

The latest roster of Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) liaison officers (LnOs) at major Marine Corps and joint commands and organizations is provided below. Note that LtCol Defries has replaced Maj Campbell as the ACE LnO with 3d MAW (Fwd). LtCol Defries will also serve as the LnO at 1st MLG until a replacement is found. Maj Wisheart will temporarily serve as the 1st MARDIV LnO when GySgt Miller redeploys. Also, note that MCCLL will expand its LnO coverage on or about 10 August, with new representatives at Headquarters, Marine Corps, 3d Marine Regiment, 3d Marine Logistics Group (MLG), and 4th Marine Division. Individuals from commands and organizations that do not have a MCCLL representative may contact [Maj Joseph Novario](#), the MCCLL Operations Officer at 703-432-1317. [Return to the Table of Contents!](#)

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3d MLG Okinawa, Japan	Expanded MCCLL LnO coverage to 3d MLG will begin on or about 10 August 2010		
3d Marine Regiment Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii	Expanded MCCLL LnO coverage to 3d Marine Regiment will begin on or about 10 August 2010		
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The Marine Corps Center for Lessons Learned (MCCLL) articles contained in this newsletter represent the considered judgment of experienced analysts assigned to the MCCLL. The purpose of the newsletter is to apprise members of the Marine Corps (as well as members of other Services and Department of Defense (DoD) commands and agencies) of recent items of

interest contained in the Marine Corps Lessons Management System (LMS).

Some information in this newsletter has been compiled from publicly available sources and is not official USMC policy. Although the information has been gathered from reliable sources, the currency and completeness of the information is subject to change and cannot be guaranteed.